



AND Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word. (1 Kings 18:21)

Life is full of choices. Choices are important since they determine our future success, failure, wealth, poverty, health, or even illness. The gravity of the spiritual choices we make are infinitely (and I do mean infinitely) of greater import than any temporal choices we make in this life. The choices we make in serving the Lord our God have eternal consequences not only in Hell, but in the rewards of Heaven.

It would be a great benefit if the people of God were as the kingdom of the ant. The ant labors season after season in storing up provision for the future when there is no other provision. Should the Christian not do likewise in storing up treasures in Heaven in anticipation of the coming ruin of this world when none other is available? As Jesus said to the rich young ruler, *One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me.* (Mark 10:21) The rich, young ruler desired the wealth of this world that he could sift between his fingers, but the treasures we stow in Heaven are on safe deposit for the day when life cannot be sustained by earthly treasures – and it pays an unimaginably high dividend in interest.

What are the Treasures of Heaven? The Treasures of Heaven are those good works we do for others, or rather allow God to do THROUGH us for others. *34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: 36 Naked, and*

ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. 37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? 38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? 39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? 40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. 41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: 42 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: 43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. 44 Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? 45 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. 46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal. (Matt 25:34-46)

It is at once obvious that these treasures are not the kind that can be stolen away for they ascend immediately to the Throne of Grace. They are not, either, to be boasted of since they are no longer ours, but belong to Heaven until we go to claim them. *26 If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain. 27 Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.* (James 1:26-27) Do you have this PURE religion? This is not merely an order to the ordained of the church, but to every member of the Body of Christ as ministers of God.

The question that Elijah posits to the people of God was not simply a question for the moment of its being spoken, but just as literally addressed to us today as to those yesterday. When the issue of homosexual marriage, abortion, or intentional sin arises, the churches are either totally silent, or even join as accomplices to the apostasies. There has arisen a postmodern approach to Christianity that ignores the Word of God and relies upon feelings and human opinion concerning right and wrong. It is a form approaching secular humanism. Even the science of genetics is ignored in order to justify transgenderism. When it comes to homosexuality or gender identity, the science of chromosomal identity is ignored completely and the role of CHOICE is emphasized to the detriment of science. If a baby is born with an XY chromosome, that child is, by scientific definition, a male. The same is true of the female born with the XX chromosome. This is simply scientific fact, and the way one feels about this has nothing to do with the fact. It would be like denying that gravity is in force and walking under a falling boulder of five hundred pounds. The result would be a flat corpse notwithstanding the opinion on gravity to the contrary.

We are all born with a proclivity to sin in some ways. We may be born with an inclination to lie, cheat, steal, gossip, or even murder. The sin becomes cardinal when we act upon the impulse. If we are tempted and drawn to the same sex, that would be sin if acted upon in a similar manner. No one is born 'homosexual.' Of course, there are influences of life that may enter in, even to a child that might create the perversion to sex. But even if a person were born with homosexual inclinations, there is no sin as long as that person remains celibate. *12 For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.* (Matt 19:12) Some eunuchs are born as such; others are made so by the perverse art of man.

So, when we live our lives, we are confronted with many temptations to sin. It is the concession we pay to sin, and the approbation of society itself, that places our souls in danger of damnation. Yes, Christ is able to forgive all sin, but we are to go, and sin no

more. If we commit sin by omission or commission, we confess our sins and continue with all intent to forebear sin.

I am disappointed when the people of our land ignore biblical morality, but I am not discouraged. It is not the role of a minister to change hearts – that is the doing of the Holy Ghost. It is the preacher's role to preach the truth and to warn the people. *16 Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein. 17 Also I set watchmen over you, saying, Hearken to the sound of the trumpet. But they said, We will not hearken.* (Jer 6:16-17) Jeremiah lost no faith when the incorrigible people of Israel refused to follow God, but THEY DID!

God has given us choices to make in life just as the story of AESOP regarding the ants and the grass hopper. The grass hopper played all summer long while the ants worked diligently. He even made light of the ants' industry. But when the leaves began to fall, and the winter snows began to sprinkle the landscape, the grass hopper began to be in want of food and shelter. He went to the ants, but they refused help to one so sluggardly. We have choices between good and evil so that we can rejoice at the blessedness of righteousness over the opposite side of the coin. We can never fully appreciate light until we have experienced smothering darkness.

Remember that the Creation of God at Eden began with a choice, did it not? *9 And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. (Gen 2:9) 16 And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: 17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.* (Gen 2:16-17) Adam had a simple choice of all of the trees of the Garden (including the Tree of Life representing the Lord); but Adam ate of the ONE tree only of which God had commanded him not to eat. WHAT A CHOICE!

Look at the wonderful history of America while it was yet young and righteous. Remember the songs and music of grandeur – My Country 'Tis of Thee, America the Beautiful, Hail, Columbia, God Bless America, School Days, etc. What ages of innocence we enjoyed as a nation under God. But what went wrong? We forgot the old songs, didn't we. We adopted vulgar and pornographic lyrics for our songs. Our sons and daughters became addicts of alcohol, drugs, and perversions of sex. We told God he was no longer welcome in our public schools or the public forum – after he had been present in those venues for two hundred years without objection. Someone stole our innocence away. But who? It was the same old Serpent of the Garden whose voice we heard and heeded. His minions walk the halls of Congress and labor in the courts to entangle us in every effort to restore morality to our sin-besieged land. I pray that we will not stop before the tree, or heed that voice longer.